

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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----- 113141

R 211817Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6784
INFO AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 17982

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, LO, UK
SUBJECT: UK/NORWAY CONSULTATIONS

REF: LONDON 17141 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: UK/NORWEGIAN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON SOVIET POLICY
IN NORTHERN EUROPE WAS HELD IN LONDON NOVEMBER 12. BOTH
SIDES CONSIDERED TALKS VALUABLE AND FOLLOW-UP SESSION
WILL BE HELD IN OSLO. NORWEGIANS TOLD BRITISH THEY PLAN
TO UNDERTAKE SIMILAR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH US. END SUMMARY

1. DAVID GOODALL, HEAD OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT,
FCO, GAVE EMBASSY OFFICER BRIEFING NOVEMBER 20 ON UK/
NORWAY CONSULTATIONS WHICH WERE HELD IN LONDON NOVEMBER
12. AGAIN GOODALL REPEATED NORWEGIAN SENSITIVITY ON FACT
OF CONSULTATIONS AS WELL AS CONTENTS.

2. GOODALL SAID FCO WAS VERY PLEASED BY THE OPENNESS AND
FRANKNESS NORWEGIANS HAD DISPLAYED DURING CONSULTATIONS.
NORWEGIANS HAD BEEN APPARENTLY SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT THE
SIMILAR APPROACH BRITISH EXHIBITED AND SUBSEQUENTLY,
NORWEGIAN EMBASSY OFFICER TOLD FCO OF THE FAVORABLE
ASSESSMENT GIVEN THE EXCHANGE BY THE NORWEGIAN FOREIGN

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OFFICE. GOODALL RECONFIRMED EARLIER FCO JUDGMENT THAT

NORWEGIAN PURPOSE IN HOLDING CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO SOVIET TALKS WAS TO SEEK CONFIRMATION NORWEGIAN ASSESSMENTS AND "REASSURANCE." AS HAD BEEN EARLIER AGREED, THERE WAS NO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND EACH SIDE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING ITS OWN RECORD OF THE TALKS. WITH SUCCESS OF INITIAL MEETING, NORWEGIANS HAVE INVITED BRITISH TO A FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IN OSLO, WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE HELD AFTER MINISTER OF STATE HATTERSLEY VISITS OSLO IN JANUARY AND BEFORE SCHEDULED CALLAGHAN VISIT TO OSLO IN JUNE.

3. BRITISH HAD REACHED AGREEMENT WITH NORWEGIANS PRIOR TO TALKS ON GENERAL TOPIC OF "SOVIET POLICY TOWARD NORTHERN EUROPE." THEY HAD ALSO AGREED EACH SIDE WOULD PRESENT AN INFORMAL PAPER AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. FCO TEAM CONSISTED OF GOODALL HIMSELF; BRIAN CARTLEDGE (HEAD OF EASTERN EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT) WHO PRESENTED INITIAL BRITISH DISCUSSION PAPER; REPRESENTATIVE OF FCO'S SCIENTIFIC OFFICE (WHO DEALS WITH ARCTIC AFFAIRS); A YOUNGER FCO OFFICER WHO TOOK NOTES. (BRITISH CONSIDERED POSSIBILITY OF INCLUDING MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SPECIALISTS, BUT ULTIMATELY DECIDED TO RESTRICT TALKS TO FOREIGN OFFICE LEVEL. CHAIRMAN FOR SESSION WAS ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY HIBBERT AND EXPERTS FROM WITHIN FCO ON MILITARY AND MARINE/TRANSPORT QUESTIONS ATTENDED SOME OF THE SESSIONS.) NORWEGIAN SIDE WAS REPRESENTED BY HEAD OF ARCTIC DEPARTMENT; HEAD OF SOVIET DEPARTMENT; A LEGAL SPECIALIST (WHO SPOKE IN DETAIL ON NORWEGIAN POLICY RE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND ITS APPLICATION TO SVALBARD); POLITICAL COUNSELLOR AND NOTE-TAKER FROM NORWEGIAN EMBASSY.

4. BRITISH WERE IMPRESSED WITH THOROUGHNESS WITH WHICH NORWEGIANS HAD APPROACHED THE TALKS. MAIN THRUST OF THEIR PAPER ON SOVIET POLICY RELATED TO THEIR FEELING OF BEING EXPOSED ON NORTHERN FLANK OF NATO TO INCREASING SOVIET THREAT. IN THIS RESPECT, NORWEGIANS LAY HEAVY EMPHASIS ON BUILD-UP OF SOVIET LAND FORCES IN KOLYMA PENINSULA AND DEVELOPMENT OF MURMANSK AS NAVAL BASE. RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET NAVAL STRENGTH MEANS FOR THE NORWEGIANS THAT THEY ARE SOMEWHAT BEHIND THE SOVIET LINE,

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AND THEY SENSE A GROWING PRESSURE ON NORWAY.

5. EXAMPLE OF SOVIET PRESSURE IS THE STEADY GROWTH IN SIZE OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY STAFF IN OSLO WHERE RATE OF INCREASE CONSIDERABLY EXCEEDS THAT IN OTHER SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES. (FYI: BRITISH CONCLUDE SOVIETS WISH INCREASE SIZE OF REPRESENTATION AS CONCRETE EVIDENCE ITS SPECIAL INTEREST IN NORWAY. END FYI) SOVIETS HAVE ALSO RE-

QUESTED ADDITIONAL CONSULATES, PARTICULARLY IN NORTHERN

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ACTION SS-25

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NORWAY. SOVIETS ARE CAMPAIGNING FOR INCREASING TRADE WITH FREQUENT DELEGATION VISITS AND EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT TRADE OFFICES IN VARIOUS CITIES. GOODALL SAID TALKS ALSO PRODUCED HINTS THAT SOVIETS HAVE OFFERED SOME TYPE OF CONCESSION TO NORWEGIANS IN ORDER TO PRESSURE NORWAY TO BETTER TERMS IN UPCOMING NORWAY/USSR TALKS ON BARENTS SEA BOUNDARIES. (BRITISH SAID NORWAY IS HOLDING TO MEDIAN LINE WHILE SOVIETS WANT TO PUSH BOUNDARY WESTWARD TOWARD NORWEGIAN COAST.) FINAL ITEM CITED BY NORWEGIANS AS TRoublesome IN SOVIET RELATIONS WAS SVALBARD, THOUGH NORWEGIANS HAVE NOTED SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET REVIVED EARLIER SUGGESTIONS OF A POSSIBLE USSR/NORWEGIAN "CONDOMINIUM" AS THEY DID IN IMMEDIATE POST-WW II PERIOD.

6. THE NORWEGIANS TOLD THE BRITISH THAT SOVIET PRESSURE TO DATE HAS NOT MEANT A REVIVAL OR RENEWED STRENGTHENING OF THE FRONT GROUPS IN NORWAY. THEY HAVE NOT YET PERCEIVED ANY EVIDENCE OF INCREASED ACTIVISM IN THESE ORGANIZATIONS OR THREATS TO INTERNAL NORWEGIAN SECURITY AND CIVIL ORDER.

7. GOODALL SAID BRITISH WERE CONSIDERABLY SURPRISED AT SIMILARITY OF UK/NORWEGIAN VIEWS, INCLUDING EVEN TERMIN-

LOGY AND LANGUAGE. (FYI: SINCE BRITISH THINK HIGHLY OF THEIR OWN CAPABILITIES IN SOVIETOLOGY, THIS IS INDEED HIGH PRAISE. END FYI)

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8. ON SVALBARD ITSELF, NORWEGIANS TOLD BRITISH THAT THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO IMPROVE SOME ELEMENTS OF NORWEGIAN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS IN THE AREA AND THAT SVALBARD IS UNDER DISCUSSION AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL IN OSLO CURRENTLY. BRITISH HAD NO LEGAL REPRESENTATION DURING THE DISCUSSIONS AND SIMPLY TOOK NOTE OF (WITHOUT ACCEPTING) LONG AND SOMEWHAT TORTUOUS EXPOSITION OF NORWEGIAN POSITION ON CONTINENTAL SHELF WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SVALBARD. (FYI: GOODALL SAID UK IS NOT LIKELY TO ACCEPT NORWAY'S CLAIM THAT SVALBARD HAS NO CONTINENTAL SHELF OF ITS OWN. END FYI)

9. BRITISH TOLD NORWEGIANS THEY WANTED TO BE HELPFUL IN SVALBARD AND INDICATED THEY MIGHT, IF NORWAY AGREED, INCREASE THE BRITISH SCIENTIFIC PRESENCE ON SVALBARD ITSELF. THE NORWEGIANS WELCOMED THE SUGGESTION.

10. NORWEGIANS TOLD BRITISH THEY ARE NOW SEEKING SIMILAR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH US, WHICH IS SEEN BY NORWAY AS ITS MAIN SUPPORT IN ANY POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION WITH SOVIETS. WHILE NATO SECURITY GUARANTEE ITSELF OFFERS NORWAY SOME SUPPORT, NORWEGIANS REALIZE THAT RESUPPLY AND NUCLEAR SHIELD DEPEND ALMOST ENTIRELY ON US. (FYI: NORWEGIANS EXPRESSED SOME APPREHENSION THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH US MIGHT BE MORE VULNERABLE TO "LEAKS" THAN TALKS WITH BRITISH. END FYI)

11. GOODALL ASKED TO BE KEPT INFORMED ABOUT US/NORWAY CONSULTATIONS. HE EXPECTS SUBJECT MATTER WOULD BE SIMILAR, BUT US EXPERIENCES MIGHT BE USEFUL PREPARATORY TO UK'S SECOND ROUND.

12. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WILL APPRECIATE BEING KEPT INFORMED OF TIMING, AGENDA, VENUE AND CAST OF CHARACTERS IN UPCOMING US/NORWAY TALKS. FCO WOULD ALSO LIKE NAME OF US OFFICIAL IN OSLO OR WASHINGTON WHO MIGHT BE CONTACTED FOR DETAILS.

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